

The head has been preserved in 5 per cent. saline formalin and is available to anyone who may wish to study it further. Its standard measurements are compared with those from *The Handbook of British Birds*, with the 1964 Whitchurch cock and with a Northamptonshire cock described earlier (Ash, 1961).

	Measurements in mm.			
	<i>The Handbook</i>	<i>Oundle cock</i>	<i>Whitchurch 1964</i>	<i>Whitchurch 1965</i>
Wing	235-260	219	215 and 216	224
Tarsus	60-78	50	45 and 45	52
Bill (from feathers)	28-32	26	21.5	24
Weight in gms.	1394	510.3	426.5	?

The 1965 specimen, like the 1964 Whitchurch bird, was also rather late-hatched. Based on wing moult it was 13-14 weeks of age (1st primary = 39 mm.), so that it hatched in the third week of July.

References:

- Ash, J. S. (1961). Dwarfism in a Pheasant. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club.* 81: 95-96.
 — (1965). A further case of dwarfism in a Pheasant. *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club.* 85: 65-66.

Some clutches of wader eggs from E. C. Stuart Baker

by C. J. O. HARRISON

Received 17th September, 1965

Work on the egg collection which the late Col. R. F. Meiklejohn presented to the British Museum (Natural History) has revealed some unsatisfactory clutches of wader eggs among those which Meiklejohn purchased from E. C. Stuart Baker. There are two sets of four eggs of the Lapwing, *Vanellus vanellus*. These are atypically dark eggs and are accompanied by Baker's original clutch card. This bears two slips giving the locality as Perthshire and the dates as April 1913, and May 1913. Baker's comments are "presumably the same bird laid both clutches. First clutch laid about second week in April, second clutch about first week in May in same field on same ridge". One egg in the May clutch is marked in Baker's handwriting "4/ *Vanellus vulgaris* / 1463 / 5. 1913 / Perthshire", and the clutch number, species number and date are on the other three. The latter three also bear a pencilled "6" or "9" and are relatively similar although one is distinctly glossier and browner than the other two. The first egg has a matt surface and is pale olive-green, sparsely marked.

The other set of four for which Baker's data card quotes "Perthshire, April 1913" consists of three similar eggs with an "L" or "7" pencilled on them, one inscribed in Baker's hand "3/ 1463 / Dumfries / April 1910" with the "3" subsequently altered to "4", the other two inscribed "3 / 1463/ April 1910". The fourth egg is unlike the other three, with a matt surface and elongated shape. It is inscribed in Baker's hand "3 / April 1919 / Durnfries".

There is also a clutch of six eggs of the Common Snipe, *Gallinago gallinago*, but the original collector's slip, if examined closely, shows that an original clutch number of "4" has been altered to "6". The eggs are inscribed in Baker's hand "c/6, 18.5.1903". The eggs could have originated

from two sources but the pattern and colour intergrade and there is no obvious discontinuity.

Meiklejohn also purchased from Baker a series of clutches of eggs of the Ringed Plover, *Charadrius hiaticula*. Two sets of four from Wells, Norfolk, one dated 1st June 1920, the other 30th June 1924, are of interest. They appear to be made up from four pairs of eggs. Each pair has a striking and distinct pattern differing markedly from that of the other pairs. They are grouped to form two clutches of four eggs which, in view of what is known of the inheritance of pattern and colour and of colour variation in other clutches of the species, are biologically improbable units.

In addition there are three clutches of the same species consisting of five eggs, one from Wells dated 28th May 1921, and two from Blakeney, one on 14th June 1917, and one on 4th May 1920. The last contains four eggs of similar colour and pattern, all being peculiar in possessing a constricted narrow end, the egg becoming noticeably narrower at one point before the tip rather than tapering evenly towards it. The fifth egg is paler in colour with an even taper. The clutch from Wells has three similar broad eggs with slightly constricted tips, another similar in markings to these but a little narrower and tapering more evenly, while the fifth is larger, buffer, and more heavily marked than the other four. The third clutch consists of five very similar eggs.

From the evidence available one can only conclude that in some cases at least eggs were regrouped into clutches. In view of this there are grounds for questioning the abnormally large clutches of Snipe and Ringed Plover, and it would be of interest to know if the statements in the *Handbook of British Birds* (Witherby *et al.* 1940) mentioning c/6 for the Snipe and c/5 for the Ringed Plover as of exceptional occurrence were based on the existence of these clutches.

References:

Witherby, H. F. *et al.* 1940. *Handbook of British birds*. Vol. 4. Witherby: London.

A specimen of *Luscinia svecica volgae* (Kleinschmidt) migrating through Rumania

by DAN MUNTEANU

Received 13th December, 1965

The Bluethroat subspecies known in Rumania is *Luscinia svecica cyanecula* (Meisner). It breeds in small numbers about the pools of the district Banat; it is known also in the rest of the country, but only as a rare bird of passage.

In 2nd April, 1963 I collected at Pingarati (Bacau district), on the Bistrita valley, a male Bluethroat whose blue plastron has a chestnut-coloured spot in the middle of it, but the lower part of the feathers forming the spot is white. Considering this peculiarity, it is clear that the bird I collected belongs to *L. s. volgae* (Kleinschmidt) (syn. *L. s. occidentalis* (Zarudny), nomen praeoccupatum), a most variable race, intermediate between the nominate *svecica* and *cyanecula*, that breeds in the central part of Russia and northern Ukraine, passing the winter in the eastern part of the Mediterranean region.

The above mentioned bird proves that some *volgae* specimens, in their migration, are passing through the eastern part of Rumania.